

A Review of Required Factors of International Education in Thailand

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Abstract This study reviewed what factors of International Education were required in Thailand. The first part of the article reviewed history of international education and educational co-operation as the approach of global society in terms of education. Three factors and seven major guiding principles of UNESCO were used as definitions and these elements were re-arranged for this study purpose. The second part was analysis of education policies data and comparison with definitions of International Education. While education policies made much of Thai identity, cultures, moral and social values, the factors of international understanding were limited. Therefore, the emphasis of international understanding may be deserved to promote International Education in Thailand.

Key words International Education, Definition, International Understanding, Thailand, Education Policies

1 Introduction

Thailand is placed as a country which has taken off from a developing country to a developed country (Suehiro, 2009). However, political conflicts such as continuous coups, the occupation of the international airport by People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) in December 2008, and the big collision in the centre of capital city in May 2010 gave Thailand a bad image. Unstable city security has influenced of decreasing in the number of tourists. According to the data of Thaiwebsite.com, the number of tourist arrivals in the first quarter and second quarter of 2010 were 4,66 million and 2,86 million (Thaiwebsite.com, 2010). The decrease of tourists was surely related to riots and demonstrations during April and May. In addition, Maplecroft (Maplecroft, 2010) which is the company analysis of country and corporate risk exposures and opportunities announced the Terrorism Risk Index (TRI) by their international assets in 2010. According to TRI, global ranking has rated Thailand at ninth place as the only extreme nation in the world. From now on, it cannot be avoided the economics of Thailand is going to fall down.

Most of Thai people are Buddhists, Muslims, Christians and some other religions are also seen. That is to say, Thailand is amultiethic country. And, Thailand is located in the center part of Southeast Asian region. Thus, the exchanges of people, trade, and business have been essential issues from the early periods. Of course, geographic factors are similar to other Southeast Asian countries. On the other hand, there are

great differences of races and cultures in these countries. In addition to this, Thailand accepts a great number of tourists, foreign residents, and immigrants from all over the world. In fact, Thailand is the top fifth foreign country where Japanese tourists have visited abroad in 2008 by the data of Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO, 2010).

Therefore, Thai people have had occasions to communicate with multiracial and multicultural people for a long time. Under these situations, the enhancement of good relationship with other cultures and foreign people are beneficial for Thailand. And, it is also meaningful to develop internationalized people to adapt this globalized society, as well. While several foreign language programs, mutual culture exchanges among affiliated foreign schools, and studying abroad are frequently seen, education to develop internationalized personnel is not seen in Thailand. There is also no compulsory subjects for international understanding in school curriculum.

UNESCO (1974) suggested “recommendation concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms” that was adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session in Paris, November 19, 1974. Here, UNESCO stated “the principle of friendly relations between peoples and States having different social and political systems on the respect for human rights and fundamental freedom concise expression “international education”” in that recommendation. Thus, International Education is the determined term to promote international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms. This ideal could be applied to Thailand. Because, understanding people and states in different social and political systems, keeping good relations with them, and respecting for human right and freedoms must contribute to development of Thailand. For the sake of the application of International Education to Thailand, the first point to be considered is the specific factors of International Education which Thailand requires. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to review what factors of International Education in Thailand.

At first, this paper defines International education. And then, education policies data are reviewed. Gathering those contents, required factors of International education in Thailand should be considered.

2 Indicators of international education

2.1 History of international education and educational co-operation

2.1.1 1960s: Rise of international education in developed countries, construction of basic education in developing countries

In this section, transition of international education and educational co-operation in the world are surveyed.

A small number of developed countries occupied the great majority of the world until

World War II ended. Colonized countries gained independence after 1945, although obvious differences between developed countries and developing countries were there. And the world economy was polarized.

The United Kingdom and other European nations have started to notice North-South problem from the beginning of 1960s. So, the promotion of Development Education which is the study of understanding the structure of North-South problem, and thinking the way of resolving it was directly related with attention of North-South problem (Osler, 1994).

At the same time, construction of basic education system became one of the urgent issues in developing countries (Kuroda, Yokozeki, 2005). In fact, the literacy rate in developing countries was very low in 1960s. UNESCO held on the regional international conference of educational development at Karachi in 1960, at Addis Ababa in 1961, and at Santiago in 1962. In these conferences, the goal of the implementation of basic education till 1980 (and till 1970 in Latin America) was resolved.

2.1.2 1970s and 1980s: Establishment of international education standard in developed countries, and stagnation of expansion of basic education in developing countries

In the United States, Global Education was introduced in 1970s (Yoshida, Ito, Ishimori, 2009). Just 1970s, the United States was in the Vietnam War and people were disgusted by the linger war. So, the educational activities were based on reflection against Americanism such as the war, and recognition of multicultural country the United States is (Tanaka, 1994). And it was taken over as World Studies in the United Kingdom. The idea of World Studies is to learn the world wide issues, and to acquire knowledge and attitude to live in the multicultures and people (Otsu, Mizoue, 2000). Almost the same time, the Labour Party government established Development Education Fund in the Overseas Development Administration in 1977 in the United Kingdom. Development Education has been expanded the scale gradually.

As mentioned in the previous part, UNESCO suggested “recommendation concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms” in 1974. This recommendation has been useful substance even it was adopted more than a quarter of a century ago (Otsu, Mizoue, 2000). It would be mentioned in details later.

Whereas, the generalization of basic education was incomplete. In fact, primary education was expanded immediately after the regional international conferences, however, population growth in developing countries was much rapidly (FASID, 2010). And then economic crisis was happened to many parts of developing countries in 1980s. It obliged educational budget to cut, and development of social sectors was standstill.

2.1.3 After 1990s: Progress of educational co-operation for basic education

The World Conference on Education for All (EFA) was held under the auspices of

World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDP in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. The biggest purpose was nation and global society should have responsibility on the assurance of basic education. This international conference influenced educational policy in developing countries and educational co-operation directly. Education for All became the key word of educational development hereafter.

Ten years later, World Education Forum was held on Dakar, Senegal in 2000 as the follow up conference. Dakar Framework for Action was established to achieve goals for EFA which was still unreached since 1990.

In the same year, United Nation Millennium Summit in New York. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was put together with eight goals and 18 specific precepts (MOFA, 2009). It included two educational goals of the spread of basic education and sexual equality in terms of education as well as Dakar Framework for Action. The history shows that international conferences and international educational co-operation make a point of educational development for social cohesion (Kuroda, Yokozeki, 2005).

Such is the outline of history of international education in developed countries and educational co-operation towards developing countries. While developed countries recognize the significance of education which is trying to understand the world imbalance from their aspects such as Development Education and World Studies, developing countries put the expansion of insufficient basic education before everything else.

2.2 Indicator of International Education

2.2.1 Establishment of "International Education" by UNESCO in 1974

This paper is focusing on International Education as mentioned, so turning now to common definition of International Education.

UNESCO has been promoting world-wide education for international understanding and co-operation after World War II (Nagai, 1980). The Constitution of UNESCO professes the purpose of organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture (UNESCO, 1945). Thus, international understanding and co-operation are emphasized for achieving those aims.

Long after World War II, UNESCO advocated "Education for International Understanding" (Tanaka, 1994). It included Peace education, Understanding of other countries, Human rights education, and Understanding of United Nations. The name of "Education for international understanding" has been changed some other denominations such as "Education in world citizenship", "Education for international understanding and co-operation" which were reflected each period. In 1974, UNESCO suggested new Education for International Understanding in the general conference at its eighteenth session in Paris. There were some backgrounds of this conference was held. Tensions among the world mounted in 1970s. For example, the oil price rise by the fourth Middle East War in 1973 made the world economic worth. Even though the

United States retreated from Vietnam, conflict between Northern Vietnam and Southern Vietnam was still continued. North-South problem of the world and economic imbalance were the biggest agenda on the international politics, and international organizations tried to resolve those problems (Osler, 1994). So, the name of “Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms” was presented as UNESCO consensus towards “new” international education in such period. Here, “International Education” adopted in this meeting instead of Education for International Understanding (Hibino, 2010). It is composed with ten chapter and 45 contents. The recognition that global co-operation is required for further development of independent countries as well as cross cultural understanding was spread in 1970s. Therefore, not only international understanding but also co-operation to bridge gaps of economical and political system among developed countries and developing countries was included into this recommendation (Ishii, 2002).

2.2.2 Three factors and seven major guiding principles

This recommendation includes broad contents of International Education more than ever. It was already emerged the only mutual understanding among multicultures did not promote peace obviously (Ishii, 2002). Here, three factors of international understanding, international co-operation, and peace were presented. And those terms were “to be considered as an indivisible whole based on the principle of friendly relations between people and States having difference social and political systems and on the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms” (UNESCO, 1974). Concretely, it states endurance of promoting international understanding, educational co-operation for new signatories of UNESCO, and both of them aim realization of peace, human rights and fundamental freedoms with related problems which should be resolved. In addition to this, seven major principles which are:

- a) An international dimension and a global perspective in education at all levels and in all its forms
- b) Understanding and respect for all peoples, their cultures, civilizations, values and ways of life, including domestic ethnic cultures and cultures of other nations
- c) Awareness of the increasing global interdependence between peoples and nations
- d) Abilities to communicate with others
- e) Awareness not only of the rights but also of the duties incumbent upon individuals, social groups and nations towards each others
- f) Understanding of the necessity for international solidarity and co-operation
- g) Readiness on the part of the individual to participate in solving the problems of his community, his country and the world at large

Are written in the recommendation.

Here, three factors, applicable principles, and concrete examples of related prob-

lems are re-arranged in the following part for the study purpose.

2.2.3 Classification of International Education contents of UNESCO as definitions: Factors, principles and its examples

Table1. Classification of Factors, Principles and Examples of International Education Topic

Factors	International Understanding	Co-operation	Peace
Principles	a) An international dimension and a global perspective in education at all levels and in all its forms	e) Awareness not only of the rights but also of the duties incumbent upon individuals, social groups and nations towards each others	c) Awareness of the increasing global interdependence between peoples and nations
	b) Understanding and respect for all peoples, their cultures, civilizations, values and ways of life, including domestic ethic cultures and cultures of other nations	f) Understanding of the necessity for international solidarity and co-operation	
	d) Abilities to communicate with others	g) Readiness on the part of the individual to participate in solving the problems of his community, his country and the world at large	
Examples of topic	Nature and effect of economic	Action to ensure the exercise and observance of human rights including those of refugees	Equality of rights of peoples
	Racialism and its eradication	Ways and means of assisting developing countries	Maintenance of peace
	Economic growth and social development and their relation to social justice	Struggle against illiteracy	Different types of war and their causes and effects
	Population growth and related questions	Campaign against disease and famine	Disarmament
		Fight for a better quality of life and the highest attainable standard of health	Cultural and political relations between countries and the importance of international law, particularly for the maintenance of peace
		Use, management and conservation of natural resources, pollution of the environment	Fight against discrimination in its various forms
		Preservation of the cultural heritage of mankind	Colonialism and decolonization

3 Education policies of Thailand in terms of International Education

3.1 Education policies concerned to definitions

In this section, the review would be shifted the emphasis away from UNESCO definition to education policies of Thailand. Education policies are reviewed in chronological order with backgrounds. Then, policies are assorted into similar items. Those items would be compared with definitions of International Education later.

National Economic and Social Development Plans and The National Scheme of Education have been guided frameworks of national education policies over years. So, as above mentioned, education policies data which are concerned to International Education would be picked up from these plans and schemes. Education policies are derived from Office of the National Education Commission, Kingdom of Thailand (1999), Office of the Education Council, Kingdom of Thailand (2006), and Murata (2008).

3.1.1 Until 1970s

The biggest purpose of National Economic Development Plan was economic growth in 1970s. In terms of social development, fostering of manpower plan made a point primarily. Thus, compulsory education tried to make longer to grow human resources up. Natural resources decreased and environmental destruction were serious.

Below education policies were taken to correspond this situation. The parenthetic number is disposed to each category at Table 2.

- Compulsory education should be seven years (1)
- Respect for national identity (Rak Thai), democratic constitution, arts and cultures (2)
- Respect for the rights of oneself and others, obligation, discipline, law, religions and moral (3)
- Awareness of responsibility towards races, communities, religions and oneself (4)
- Recognize of natural resources and environmental preservation (5)

3.1.2 1980s

The second oil shock made the world economy in stagnation. Thailand was also affected domestic economy and social situation. Planning of National Development Plan tried to be based on bottom-up system from top-down way.

Below education policies were taken to correspond this situation.

- Provision for the shortage number of talents of science and technology (6)
- Emphasis of the role in family and social organization in terms of youth moral, rules, and responsibilities (7)

3.1.3 1990s

Globalization made people to have interests to democracy, human rights and environ-

mental preservation. Development plan emphasized sustainable development in this decade. The plan showed three goals of economic growth, income redistribution, and improvement of human resources and quality of life and environment.

Below education policies were taken to correspond this situation.

- Compulsory education should be nine years (8)
- Environmental preservation (9)
- Contribution to the world economy (10)
- Respect for education concerned to moral, mind, cultures, and social values (11)
- Respect for national identity, traditional history, cultures (12)
- Understanding of national identity against foreign cultures influx (13)
- Utilizing of national arts and cultures for international understanding and international exchange (14)
- Emphasis on local wisdoms, regional curriculum (15)

3.1.4 After 2000s

Society demanded to manage rapid changes of society, economy and environment caused by globalization. Development plan made a point of insufficient economy which was suggested by His Majesty King. The balanced development among social, economical, environmental and cultural problems was regarded.

Below education policies were taken to correspond this situation.

- Ability to respond rapid changing of society (16)
- Environmental preservation and effective use (17)
- Contribution to the national role in the global society (18)
- Promoting foreign languages to correspond internationalization, technical and cultural exchanges (19)
- Society that fulfilled with solidarity (20)
- Solving the structural problems of social differences (21)
- Development talents of science and technology to enhance competition in the global society (22)
- Respect for local wisdoms and regional cultures (23)

3.2 Comparison with definitions of UNESCO International Education and education policies data

Above policies are supposed to overlap with some of UNESCO definition. Therefore, below table shows accord and disaccord with indicators of International Education. The checks in the table mean a definition and policies are in accord. These policies concerned to International Education can be assorted into similar categories.

Table2. Comparison With Definitions of UNESCO International Education and Education Policies of Thailand

Categories of Policies\Definition	<i>International understanding</i>			<i>Co-operation</i>			<i>Peace</i>
	a	b	d	e	f	g	c
National identity, traditional history, local wisdom (2,12,13,14,15,23)		✓					
Morals, rules, rights and responsibilities (1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11)				✓			
Environmental preservation (5, 9, 17)	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Contribution to the world, society, solidarity (10, 18, 20)	✓				✓	✓	✓
Respond rapid changing of society (16, 21)					✓	✓	
Foreign languages, Science and Technology to correspond internationalization (6, 19, 22)			✓				

(For the definition of UNESCO International Education see Table 1)

3.3 Interpretation

Education policies data and the comparative table showed following points:

- Educational policies in Thailand make a point of traditional history, cultures, local wisdom which are based on Thai identity
- Moral, social values, traditional history and cultures occupy the important elements
- Environmental education is recognized as one of the important factors of international co-operation
- What are special mentioned subjects to promote International Education are foreign languages, science and technology

It is possible to confirm that plural policies overlap with the framework of co-operation and peace. However, the framework of International Understanding, especially definition b (Understanding and respect for all peoples, their cultures, civilizations, values and ways of life, including domestic ethic cultures and cultures of other nations) includes little accordance with education policies data. Judging from above, international understanding is limited factor in terms of the definition of International Education. To put it the other way, the emphasis of international understanding may enhance possibilities of International Education in Thailand. Therefore, it seems reasonable to interpret “international understanding” is required factor.

4 Conclusion

This paper has reviewed International Education and definitions which UNESCO suggested. Then, those definitions have been correspondent to education policies of Thailand for analyzing what factors would be required to International Education in Thailand. From above sections, accord and disaccord with definitions have emerged. Finally, the result showed that “international understanding” is required factor for International Education in Thailand.

It needs further researches to answer what are specific areas, subjects and contents appropriate to promote International Education and international understanding. Next examination to be taken will be the analysis of the actual education system and curricula.

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